



David Watson, RN, BSN
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UTMB Correctional Managed Care
Estelle Regional Medical Facility
264 FM-3478
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April 22, 2004

TO: Elaine Mysliwec, RN, MHSA, Director, Facility Nursing Services
FROM: David Watson, RN, BSN
RE: Allegations of a Hostile Work Environment

Please find attached a copy of a resignation letter from Elizabeth Ford, RN. Ms. Ford was employed as an Assistant Nurse Manager at the Estelle RMF. She submitted her resignation today effective immediately. She states in her letter of resignation that she failed to provide the traditional two weeks notice because she felt she would be "...working in a hostile environment...."

Ms. Ford was involved in a verbal altercation with another ANM, Leigh Gossett on Monday 4-19-04. Ms. Ford brought this to my attention in the form of a letter delivered to my office on 4-20-04. This was the first knowledge I had of the incident. The Cluster Nurse Manager, Mary Adams, RN, is away on vacation so it was brought to my attention for resolution. I immediately began finding and interviewing witnesses to the event. I spoke with and obtained statements from all witnesses I was able to identify. Those witnesses included the following:

John Wang, PA
M. Anderson, RN
P. Thomas CO-III

I also spoke with Ms. Gossett and finally Ms. Ford herself. It seems Ms. Ford's version of events differs significantly from *all* of the witnesses. Of particular significance is that Ms. Ford alleged that Ms. Gossett was rude, aggressive and unprofessional toward her. No one else observed this. In fact, Ms. Anderson in her statement pointed out that Ms. Ford was acting unprofessionally. Mr. Wang's statement revealed, and Ms. Ford verified during our interview, that she stated to S. Barksdale during a telephone conversation that she did mention a recent surgery Ms. Gossett had undergone. I found this to be completely unprofessional and unacceptable. Even Ms. Ford admitted to me that it was unprofessional and had no excuse for her behavior. Mr. Wang also stated that he heard her say to Barksdale that she told Ms. Gossett to shut up and that may have angered her.

Ms Ford also admitted to me that when Ms. Gossett left her office after the first contact inside the office that she followed Ms. Gossett out of the office and challenged her in a very stern voice. Given that Ms. Ford admits that she provoked this incident and given the fact that no one else could support any unprofessional or aggressive behavior on the part of Ms. Gossett I have difficulty finding any support for Ms. Fords claim of a hostile work environment.

I would also point out that Ms. Ford was administratively moved to the Estelle facility, in part, due to allegations made against her from her subordinates at Ellis that she was creating a hostile work environment and that she was rude, aggressive and at times hateful toward employees. It was my intent to move Ms. Ford closer to my office and under the supervision of a fresh Nurse Manager, Ms. Adams, to oversee her behavior and habits from a closer and fresh perspective. I wanted to give Ms. Ford the benefit of the doubt, as it were, regarding her behavior. Due to the findings of my investigation I intended to pursue the disciplinary process with Ms. Ford and also with Ms. Gossett.

On 4-21-04, during our interview, I informed Ms. Ford of my intention to pursue a disciplinary course with her. Following my investigation I feel there is evidence to support that Ms. Ford was the provocateur in this incident and failed to make any effort to de-escalate the situation. I found her behavior failed to conform to the minimum expectations one would have for a manager. I feel this incident lends much credibility to earlier reports of her poor conduct at Ellis.

In summary I was very disappointed in Ms. Ford's conduct and I find no substance to her allegations of a hostile work environment here at Estelle RMF.

I am attaching copies of all the documents I have in this case for your review. Please free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for your interest in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Watson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" and last name "Watson" clearly distinguishable.

David Watson

Xc: Sandy Rader, Human Resources